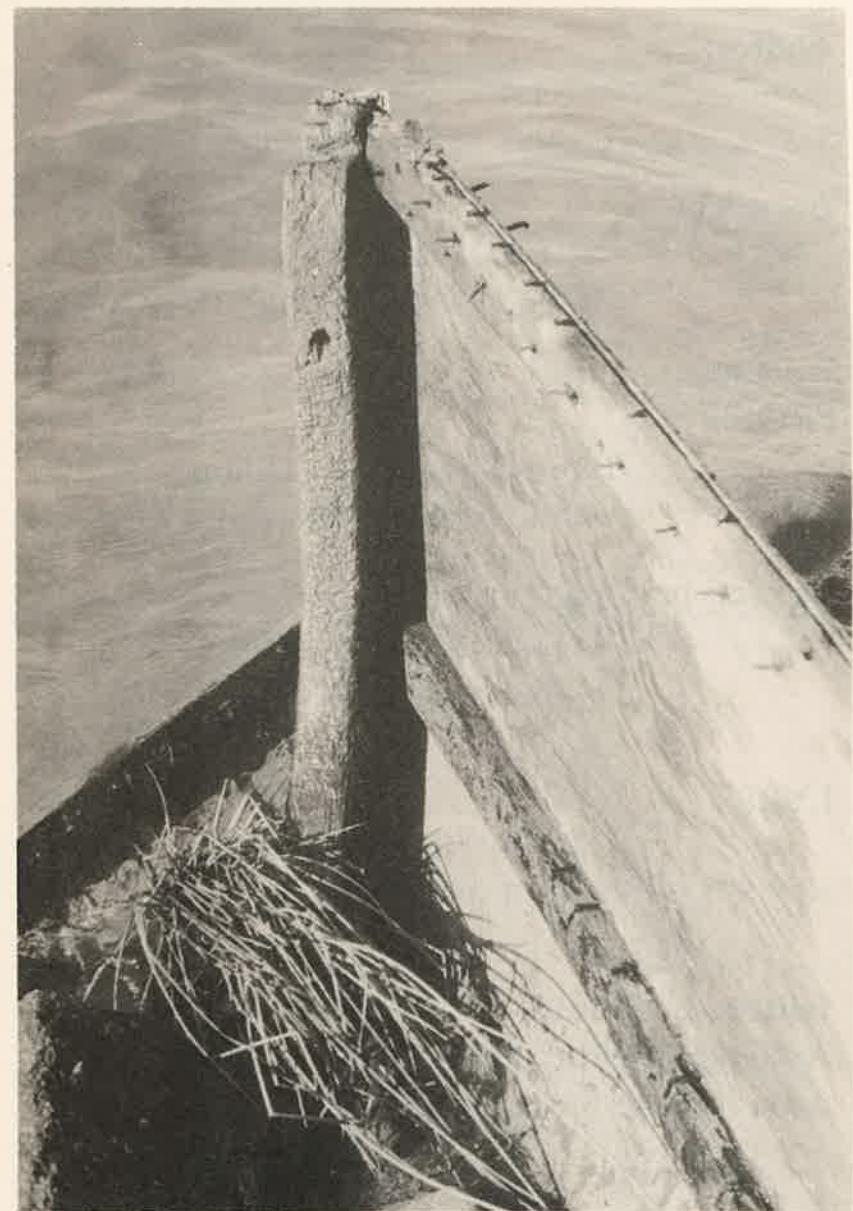




Photo by: Paul Clerici

SERENADE
The Curry Arts Journal
1985



Paul Devlin

Contest Winners

Photos:

1st — John Jenni
2nd — Paul Devlin

Artwork:

1st — Beck Rowe
2nd — Elyse Kule

Writing:

PROSE

1st — Theodore Vasiliou
2nd — Harry Shapiro

PROSE POETRY

1st — Beth Dimock
2nd — Rosie Rosenberg

LYRIC

1st — Nancy Lazzaro
2nd — Lori Burger

Editor: Ed Gault **Co-Editor:** John Moore

Assistant Editor: Jim Loftus

Advertising: Steve Elias

Special thanks to the S.G.A. for all their support.

The War Memorial

The ground in front of the stone columns was inches of mud. Makeshift walkways of wood planks had been put down to temporarily correct what had been called a bad design.

Hundreds of people had come earlier to celebrate the materialization of and acknowledgement of a war. Now, there was only a handful of people, and the ground they'd trampled to mud. Not far from there, there were five men asking for signatures on a petition. "P.O.W.s still over there," the sign read. Two people with thick loose leaf notebooks stood ready to answer questions about the memorial at the chronological beginning of the structure.

Some people walked from one end of the memorial to the other, their questions answered in the time it took them to get to the other side. Several people searched for familiar names, sometimes lifting their hands back after only a second, others ran their fingers across the letters several times.

"The reflective quality of the stone is like the people," one woman said. The starkness of the memorial offered no glorification, possibly not even consolation.

Between some of the columns were flowers people had put next to the names of those the war had taken.

A father with his little girl walked over the planks, careful not to step in the mud, while looking at the names. They walked down the planks and the sound was hollow and lonely.

Beth Dimock

mind-dreams

build me a rainbow
and color it plaid,
with the cheeriest colors
there are to be had.

make me a promise
paint me a clown;
weave me a daydream
and banish a frown.

unravel a sunbeam,
a river of gold;
sweep the horizon
with paintbrush strokes
bold.

braid me a pigeon
dance me a dream;
follow a ripple
that's heading
downstream.

spin me a sunrise
a shimmer with dew;
grow me a pony
with mane silver-blue.

or maybe a zebra
of black and of green;
the loveliest creature
that I've ever seen.

find me a dragon,
blue-green and loud;
pluck me a daisy,
and gift-wrap a cloud.

wish on a poppy
all happy and red;
or on a whizzing-by
comet instead.

if all of these things
you've yet to find,
it's time to stop searching
and open your mind!

Nancy Rita Lazzaro

Don't Be Shy

Lori Berger

Go ahead/Touch me!
I may appear Tense/
I'm a mind full of ideas/
My feelings immense.
Go ahead/Explore me!
The inside and out/
Analyze and criticize/
but learn/what I'm about.

Her heart began to pound in her ears, almost drowning out the sounds of the stage beside her. No matter what, she thought. It's always the same. It could be my first show ever, my fourteenth—even fortieth, still the butterflies set up housekeeping in my stomach. Look at this, she thought scornfully. My hands are shaking, my body's trembling, why do I do this? Her mind traveled back to a sunny day from her childhood. The stone porch's steps had become a runway for her and her friends beauty pageant. Next was the talent competition. Her voice began, hauling nervously at first, until she had created both a magical world and the enormous dragon that guarded it. With shining eyes and bold arm gestures, she became Prince Vladimar, as he fearlessly battled the ferocious beast. Her friends sat spellbound, as she leapt about, shouting all the while.

Change to school, and a classroom play. Thanksgiving with Miles Standish and Priscilla Alden. Her hands trembled slightly as she held the serving tray garnished with turkey, stuffing, and dressing. Walking over to place the tray on the table, she stumbled slightly, causing several cranberries to roll off onto the floor.

"WHO'S TURN IS IT?" Sounded from the stage. With a start, she came back to reality. Almost my cue, she thought and swallowed nervously. As she waited she asked herself again, why do I do any of this?

Why? She quickly answered, in order to live! To become alive! All the tears, sweat, and perspiration became worthwhile, when the character she was playing became alive. Having a baby must feel like this, she decided and smiled slightly. A back stage member brushed by with a hiss of 'Break a leg.' With several deep breathes she began to relax, all the while adopting the new identity of the character she was playing. Setting her shoulders back with a final long exhale, she stepped through the door.

Rosie Rosenberg

He is a fellow human,
but to you, he is an animal.
His life is seeping away,
to be caught in the sidewalk.
This spot he knows very well,
maybe too well.
you turn your head away,
your face shows disgust.
You feel sympathy,
but you don't acknowledge it.

Fantasies in your head,
Your hand reaching to him.
The nerves twitch in your arm,
not sure which way to go.
Your intuition races through you,
your arm snaps closer,
perhaps in protection.
As you go farther away,
you see him as a whole.
And the realization hits again;
he is a person of the streets.

Denyse Comini



John Jenni

As Bones Do Brittle Brake

As bones do brittle brake
And heart to death does take
I wait with patience to Awake
and in another role partake

All the answers, all the lies
will sit on scales before my eyes
The ax will drop, they'll drop like
flies
And then I'll have cut them down to
size

I will be King, King for a day
but probably won't be asked to stay
and then they'll send me far away
to rot, stink, crumble; to decay

When I am gone you'll think of me
of what I know and what I see
of what and where I turned out to be
Scared? Just be patient that's the key

David Gannon



John Jenni

Peter

Peter was born. After twenty years of life his parents thought he was full grown. By then he was in college. The college was in Milton; the students called it Camp Curry. That wasn't its real name. A lot of things aren't called by their real names. Television is called T.V., Chevrolet is called Chevy., T.V., Chevy, and Camp Curry are all nicknames. Peter had a nickname, Pete. Everyone called Jack, Jack. Nicknames are a thing of chance; they happen or they don't. Peter wondered about that. he thought, "It's planned to make things seem like chance." That meant he believed in fate.

Pete took life with relish (no mustard). It took a special order to get relish at Burger King, but they didn't let special orders upset them. Maybe they took Rolaids. Rolaids were for when you were upset and needed relief. The makers of Rolaids claimed "R*O*L*A*I*D*S" spells "relief." That wasn't how relief was really spelled. Which didn't even faze Peter because he couldn't spell. He, unlike a dandelion, had troubles. His troubles stemmed from his family. When he thought of his troubles he would grin. To him, grinning was no trouble; it gave him relief.

Peter was physically grown-up. The dandelion blossomed. Pete found life was very weird. When people met they said, "What's happening?" They answered, but they did not care (That was HIP). Peter asked, "What's not happening?" Nobody answered, but Peter cared. Anyone could see what was happening; Peter wanted to know what he could not see! Atomic scientists claimed if you looked too closely at something you ended up changing it. To learn about atomic structure without looking, they invented quantum mechanics. He didn't know about quantum mechanics; (he was not very HIP).

Some people would utter "What's old?" People would grin and tell. When he would say the same thing, people would grin and think he was crazy. That was bad. Steve Martin was "wild and crazy." That was good. Steve and he never met. That didn't matter. Peter didn't think much mattered; he took everything in stride. His grandmother took everything with a grain of salt. They were both healthy attitudes, but like any good thing you could have too much. Even though he took things in stride, he still realized he had problems, and his attitude was, still, self defeating.

Most of the time he was happy. He wondered why he was, When he cried he wasn't happy. He just wished he could figure out what made him happy. When he was busy, he was happy; but he didn't grow. He only grew up when he cried.

It was so foggy that he couldn't see. This amount of fog was, for the area normal. NORM L was an association that was for the legalization of pot. Peter got high; he wondered if that made him normal.

He wasn't religious. Some people took Heroin religiously. It made them peaceful. They couldn't stop taking it; it was addictive. He thought religion could be addictive. He never "shoots up." George Carlin thought religion was like a lift in a shoe, and did not want to wear anyone else's shoe, if it has

a lift in it. Peter agreed.

Peter found that he could easily relax on the Island, but then he could relax anywhere. When the dandelion died it was relaxed, for it had sown its spores. He wondered. Alice wondered in Wonderland. He thought the author must have been tripping. So did Jack, who was his roommate. Jack tripped. Peter didn't. That was when he was an undergraduate. Now he was looking for a roommate of the opposite sex. The boats in the Harbor were called she, but the bridge was neuter. Some people thought he was a fairy but he wasn't.

One winter, someone stole The J.P. Morse, a model ferryboat from Peter's home. Peter loved that boat. He cursed the thief. He said, "You stole my ferryboat you fag."

Peter wouldn't lie, cheat, or steal. He would do anything else. Sometimes he would sell drugs. He made most of his money that way. It wasn't much, but then his rent was free. "Free by the sea," he thought, as he grinned.

When he thought of his life in Maine he grinned. When he thought of being rich he grinned. It seemed his parents were rich, he's not. He did spend his money well, though so did Eliza Doolittle's father in *Pygmalion*. When he spent money he felt good about himself; it made him happy. He didn't worry about the gas stove at night if he spent his money well during the day. Its power gave him an adrenaline high; it made him feel normal.

Charlie was Steinbeck's dog. A dog was said to be man's best friend. Peter had a yellow lab, but she wasn't his best friend. She was just a friend. That's what a lot of girls told him: "I just want to be your friend." As hard as he tried, he couldn't view a girl as just a friend. He figured girls wanted to be thought of as friends before they would sleep with him. He didn't sleep with many girls.

He moved to Seabreeze Ave out of desperation. He needed a field to be alone in. He needed a place for friends to visit him, a place to be secure, a place to be alone. He thought of his post-college life as a guest, a guest to find his own reality, financial security, and the motivation to succeed. On the Island in the home of his late great-grandfather he found a womb.

He felt he could only make money when he was happy; that wasn't true, but that is what he told himself. Lying to himself, thought he, wasn't a lie. He wouldn't lie to other people because those people might get hurt. He didn't mind hurting himself.

Peter was pledging himself. On his face was a lemon-scented no-wax shine. He thought back to the dandelion fields. He remembered the wind blowing, the spores off the stems. The dandelion hadn't cared. Now, he too, faced the trade winds. He smiled; Peter relished in happiness, and even sprinkled on a little mustard.

He used to have a whopper of a problem. The Burger King ads said, "It takes two hands to handle a whopper." That wasn't quite truth in advertising, because it took him a lot more than two hands to handle his whopper; in fact Rolaids didn't help either except when he had gas. Gas wasn't his problem, life was, and there was no relief in life, not even from the bull pen.

The pledge brought out his smile because it didn't put on a waxy build-up. It didn't dull his natural finish, but it didn't solve his problem. What solved the problem is what he used before the pledge. You could call it therapy, but he called it by its nickname. He called it elbow grease.

Epilogue

Peter pledged himself to Kathy. She gave him tender loving care and helped him change. He said vows, not to his religion, not to anyone or anything but his wife and himself. She really didn't help him change; he changed himself. Peter was now an adult, not because his parents thought he was full grown, but because he did.

H.A.B. Shapiro

Innocence

The little boy ran across the road to gather his marbles that had spilled from the velvet pouch. I studied him carefully, for it was interesting to see how a small child valued these ornate glass spheres. It was as if these glasses contained priceless information concerning this child.

The purple velvet pouch was gripped between the chubby fingers of the miniature hand. His lips were in a fixed state, one of determination. His two wide eyes peered out from under his ruffled straw hair, revealing his innocence, his naivete.

Miniature and innocent. It seems almost impossible to believe that this child will soon be exposed to the true reality of the world in which he resides. What effect will reality have upon him? And what will happen to this innocent child?

Everyone was a small child once, when the only problem that arose was that of spilled marbles. Once in a while it would be wonderful to escape back into the past and throw away all priorities and goals, allowing us to live for velvet pouches. Purely impossible but what a refreshing thought...

Mary Marsella

Weekend Exterminator

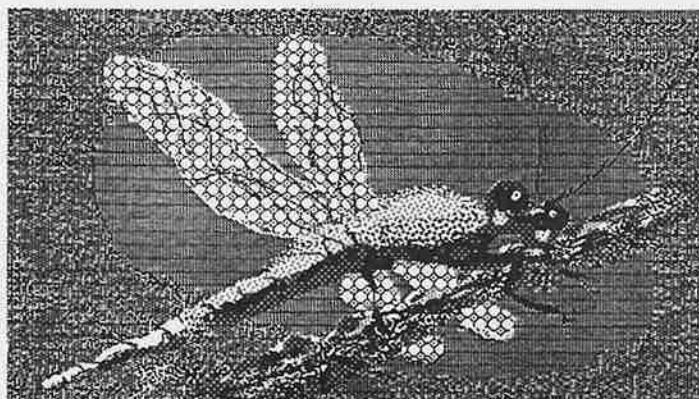
You may laugh, but I go home on weekends so I can kill bugs, yup I'm an exterminator. Trust me when I say I do it for the money not the experience. The way I got my job was from my uncle. He's the president of a pest control company and soon had me as one of his employees. I work full time in the summer, but while I'm at school I'm only a weekend exterminator. Working is the only way I can get money for the week.

I know being an exterminator isn't one of the most prestigious jobs, but I don't mind. I have been killing bugs for about four and a half years, ever since I was fifteen. In exterminating I have come across many types of wildlife, from ants to rats. You name it, we kill it. It's a different job, and some people may actually call it strange, but who listens to people anyway?

If you have a strong stomach, I'll tell you what happened to me about a year and a half ago. We got a call from the Boston Housing Authorities. They wanted bids for exterminating condemned buildings downtown. Well, the bid our company put in won. We signed a contract and headed off to Boston. We went into the buildings which had caught fire a little over a year ago, and proceeded to the basement. Besides the amount of cockroaches we came across, there were about a billion rats, I mean mega rats. Well it took all of two seconds and my partner and I were out of there. No way am I going down there again, at least not without a gun, I said. An hour and a half later my partner and I were armed with pellet spray guns. I told the guy I'm an exterminator not a marksman. Get this he slipped me a fifty dollar bill and like an ass I was down there taking pop shots at rats. At the end of the day we had three and a half large plastic bags full of dead rats.

This is a true story!!!

Dennis Colarusso



Computer
Graphics

M. Lundvall



Paul Clerici

Neither Form Nor Silence

When the contours
Of suffering
Meld and mesh
With the formless
And being is silenced
The seekers of meaning
Will find their peace.

When black and white
Join hands
In silent reconciliation
And laughter extrapolated
Meets with tears
The living lost
Will know a home.

When form is seen
As the void's lost shadow
And emptiness is known
To be the shadow of being
And the storm rages and roars
In spellbound serenity
One questions no more.

Steve Lonergan

B: Air. Pt.

10:45 and one more hour here alone in this busy airport, just watching people go by. It's kind of like sitting at a fashion show watching some of the models go by; and how about some of these models? Where do all these people come from? The little old lady shrivelling down to nothing. Her coat engulfs her and looks as if it is a tremendous weight; and her scarf is wrapped around her neck like toilet paper on a roll. She seems so out of this time, however, she seems to be relating to that young man over there very well. The bleach blond bee hive do, along with the waxy red lipstick makes her look like she walked out of a time machine from the fifties. The hair is piled so high on her head that it seems to be outsizing her tiny body three to one.

Speaking of three to one, would you look at that mother haphazardly trying to collect her three children; those ratios don't seem too favorable for the mother, I wonder where the father is. Oh, there he is — just as I thought, beer in one hand and the sports section comfortably placed on top of his beer belly. Just as I took my eyes off the father, there was little blond haired, blue eyed Johnny pushing over the ashtray stand. What a beast, he's not even listening to his mother. The mother makes a mad dash to catch the child but she's too late, "Daddy, Daddy, don't let Mommy hurt me, it was just an accident, really it was; please say you believe me." Oh no, the mother has already lost the battle, Johnny started to cry; can't the father see through this pathetically bad act? It looks as if Johnny is getting very favorable reviews from the audience; I'd be willing to bet this is not his first debut. The audience around is whispering, and the old ladies are saying what a sweet little boy he is, and how people like his mother should not be able to have children. But Johnny has not won yet, he knows by the look in his mother's eyes that he won't be sitting down for a long time when they get home.

As I turn my eyes away from little Johnny, something really catches my attention, WOW how did I ever miss him; tall, slim and would you take a look into those eyes, those beautiful blue eyes. He's looking at me, look at those eyes, enough to make me melt. I think I am; my hands are clammy and I'm sure my face is bright red. He looks a little nervous as he smiles to me with a short smile and continues to fidgeting with the newspaper in his hand. Maybe he is contemplating coming over to talk to me. I can tell he's shy because every time I catch him looking over at me he acts as if he's looking over my head at the doors of gate twenty-six. Gorgeous, looks intelligent, ambitious, and outgoing in his own laid back way. They don't make those in Chicago; I think I'll stay here, OHHH my gosh he's really walking toward me, do I look O.K.? What am I going to say? My face is turning red and I can feel my eyes beginning to water. Why do I always get embarrassed. Then he flashes me a smile that says only one thing, "where have you been all my life?" He walks by not saying that but he says, "I missed you so much." Missed me, what is he talking about? I don't even know this guy, and then I saw her, all five feet ten inches of a size three,

Christy Brinkley look a like. She looks as if she walked right out of Glamour magazine. After they embraced and got re-acquainted and back in the swing of things; after one long gross display of public affection, they started walking off arm in arm. As they walked by me, her Gucci purse, looking more like a suitcase just happened to hit my old worn down K-Mart, blue light special back pack.

"Oh sorry, Honey." I'll give you sorry honey, I ain't no honey of yours, you bleach blond amazon! I guess I forgot to open my mouth, because she did not seem to hear me, and they just kept walking off. Walking off into terminal D, hand in hand like the end of some Goldy Hawn, Burt Reynolds movie. Walking hand in hand into the distance, past the candy machine and quarter charts.

The people in the movie theater wait for their heroines names to come up in the credit listings, while I silently walk out the back way knowing my name will never be up in the listings. Well, at least not for this week, but next weeks show is *Sallie Finds Happiness in Life*, a true documentary about the effects Life cereal has on college students.

Sallie Tyrrell

Outside Sounds

It was warm in the sanctuary. Even jeans and a button down collar shirt bordered on being uncomfortable. After getting a bulletin I went to the pew where I usually sit. The sun was shining in the window through multi-colored stained glass windows. The colors of the windows, the deep red of the rug and the huge dark brown beams bordering the corners of the ceiling combined to form the definition of the word majestic.

The usual soft hum of voices before the service started filled the warm air. As the minister walked up to his chair, the hum took on a final tone and you could sense that silence would soon be present. We returned a "good morning" with the minister in partial unison. As he started the pastoral prayer I looked around for smiles or frowns or even shut eyes; all were present.

I stared out the window, my gaze filtered by yellows, blues and greens. My leave was cut short by the beginning of the first hymn. The choir filed up the center aisle. I sat down when the hymn was over. I don't remember many details of the service; probably I was escaping out the window again, returning after realizing the complete silence that had fallen. I started to focus my attention on where I was when the sound of a siren came ripping through the calm. The screech swiftly increased and it became apparent that it would pass right in front of the church. Although already fairly lengthy, the silent prayer continued until the siren was far enough away so it wouldn't obscure the minister's voice.

Beth Dimock

Memories

On a muggy August evening in 1976, I boarded a plane in Boston, waved good-bye to my parents, and began a month-long vacation in Greece. As I look back, there are many things that make this long-ago summer stand out significantly in my memory.

I was thirteen years old then and flying alone overseas for the first time. Would someone be at the airport in Athens to meet me? Would I be able to make myself understood with my meager knowledge of the Greek language? How much was a drachma? And would the people in the small village of Nea Kerasia, my eventual destination, like me? I did not enjoy the plane trip because I was consumed with worry and dread of the unknown.

My grandmother and aunt met me at the airport and we began our tour of the city of Athens, and then boarded a ship to visit the Greek isles. Memories of many of these historic places have faded, but I will never forget the little village of Nea Kerasia with its leisurely way of life, where I settled down for a three weeks' visit with the relatives about whom I had heard so many stories but had never seen.

This quiet village, a one-hour bus ride from the City of Salonika, has picturesque houses of stucco surrounded by an abundance of bright flowers, lemon and fig trees. One paved road runs through the town. All other roads are dusty, dirt lanes with ditches on either side. The village women sweep these ditches every evening at sunset with hand-fashioned straw brooms. My fifteen year old cousin, Panayoti (Peter in English), milked the family cows everyday and delivered the glass containers of milk in the baskets of his bicycle, cycling around to the village homes. There was no such thing as pasturized, homogenized or Vitamin D added.

My relatives were fortunate to have an inside bathroom, perhaps the first in the village. It was, I soon discovered, just for show. We as guests from America used it. The cost of electricity to heat water for a shower was exorbitant, so a large, tin tub placed in the middle of the kitchen floor was the family's Saturday night bath ritual. They still used their outhouse located (believe it or not) beside the barn. The kitchen with a few modern appliances (refrigerator, oven and electric fry pan) was entirely for show. Cooking, for the most part, was done outside to save on the use of electricity.

A typical summer's day began at 5 a.m. (in order to take advantage of the cool, early morning air) to begin work in the grape fields. Work did not cease until a truck was loaded for market. A meal was served at noon, consisting of fresh tomatoes, fresh fruits, and French fries (they had just recently discovered this gourmet treat!). This was followed by a mandatory two-hour siesta, which was a difficult adjustment for me, at the age of thirteen. In fact, I never managed during my entire visit to enjoy their custom of lying down to take a nap immediately after eating noon meal. Now that my like has become non-stop, I could on any given day here at Curry College practice their siesta custom with great joy. The remainder of the afternoon was spent playing with my cousins or

watching Greek television. This turned out to be an important language-learning aid for me. Each day my familiarity with the language increased simply by watching the commercials because many of the products were familiar ones that we see here in the States. I recall memorizing in Greek an entire commercial for "Tide", the laundry detergent. When I arrived home I recited non-stop the entire ad with all the inflections and gestures for my parents. I can recall that when the laughter over this performance died down, they said, "Ted, you are now beginning to think and speak in another language." Watching "Gilligan's Island" on Greek TV was the hilarious highlight of each hot summer afternoon, but I was totally unaware that I was absorbing the language at a rapid pace.

The evening meal was served anywhere from 9 p.m. to 11 p.m., followed by a stroll into the village square to gossip with neighbors and friends. This was a rigid, never changing nightly ritual. There were no cinemas, pizzerias, or MacDonalds.

The church plays a prominent role in Greek Village life. Every Sunday we walked as a family to the village church where there were no pews, just a few wooden chairs in the back for the elderly. Everyone else stood for the one-hour service. The floors were marble and the high ceilings were supported by columns. Gold icons and elaborate paintings created an atmosphere of awe and beauty.

When I arrived back in my New England home town, I could not believe all the hurrying and scurrying about. Everyone seemed to rush to school, to shop, to eat, to go to church, and even to go to bed. When the question came up for discussion about whether or not to change the Sunday Blue Laws, a hotly debated topic at that time, I can remember being the only person my age who was against it. No doubt I had been influenced by the less hurried life of a quiet Greek village. My vacation had transported me back in time to a more leisurely way of life, a way of life I will never forget.

T. Vasilou

A Moment of Thought

The dismal grey shades out the sunset.

Light cracks through the clouds revealing a tint of pink.

Birds over head take my eye off the faded horizon.

A couple stops to talk, the sounds of cars and trucks howl through the trees with the wind.

The moans of society echo through the hills.

The sounds of industry, a warped tribal cry of retribution.

J. S. Imgrund

The Sea

A beautiful, undulating sea,
A deep, rich, inviting blue—
These are the properties of her
Eyes.

The warm sunshine's glow
And the spectrum of life from a
Distance, as well as the emotional,
Instinctive and varying thoughts of
A perplexing personality—cannot be
Hidden from her eyes.

Emotions turned to feelings,
They are not afraid to flow,
When I am in her sea.

I feel a change occurring,
I am learning more than I can
See,
I feel a growth of a different kind.

Price of Admission

The question "why?"
Ache empty space
So lonely birthright
Abandoned so.
Our phantom question
An answer? — No
For us forever
"Why?"

Yet something else
Lies within
Your pupils deep
Our eyes aligned
Mirror to us each
Our image seen seeing
Being seen seeing being seen
Seeing being seen
Seeing beyond eternity
Until we spawn
The timeless second
From which we were born.

Although I may feel
Out of breath at times,
I grapple to the surface for
More air.

I swim in the sea.
I get back a resounding will
A very strong, exhilarating
Feeling—
To continue.

There is my sea.
My horizons have been opened up,
I feel the water around my toes,
I constantly tread on.

Freedom is what I feel.
Freedom to be me.
This freedom comes from
My sea.

Mark Pacheco

The Life of a Valley Girl

Hi, like I'm Kathy. Ya know. I live in the Valley as in San Fernando. Like I don't mind living there, but ya know I can't communicate with like the parental units. And doing the dishes is like totally bogus. The dishes are all like grody to the max.

My brother is like so narly. He gets away with like everything. I'm too sure. Like even the dishes, ya know.

My friends are totally awesome. I mean we're not like the kids in L.A. We love to go shopping and like borrow like the credit card from like the parental units. Ya know. We always go there like on Saturdays and buy some new totally awesome clothes.

School is like really negator. Ya know. Like I'm soo sure, Mr. Gloor. He's like soo narly. He wears like the same bow-tie everyday. Ya know, that's really bogus. Then there's this one dude who's like in my English class, like his name is Tripp. He's soo awesome. Ya know. I mean he wears like the nicest polo shirts in the whole entire valley.

Anyway, like me and Jan are like going to the beach now. I really hope that Tripp is there. Like see ya later.

Cindy Kohll



Josh Lessing

The White Rose

Edward Gault

O White Rose so pure, so free
While so many stood by
Only you children could see.

The blade came so swiftly down
"Es lebt land die Freiheit!"
The triumphant slogan rang out,
As blood flowed through the gutters of every German town.

From Dachau to Russia, never have so few, so young
given to so many so old,
the hope of a new tomorrow and the dream of an era—
gone by—
the sun, the orchards and the
shaded forests reaching for the sky.

You stood, alone as traitors
dodging the glaring gaze of the Gestapo.
From Munich to Hamburg your leaflets spread
"A Call to all Germans! Sabotage the Reich."

You dared to care,
When guns were pointed at the innocent
by men who reduced civilization to a mass
graveyard.

For the girl who bore the Yellow Star
and stabbed the sod with her shovel
You, Hans reached out to place in her hair a white rose
While so many kicked, and shouted "Kike!"
She watched after you, as you boarded the train
Could you ever know
How much you eased her pain?

And the child in the white dress,
That in your dream you saved, Sophie, sweet Liberty.
O what a price!
Could we ever know?
The blade came so swiftly down
staining red the February snow.

Your children never got to know you, Christl,
"What was Daddy like, Mommy?"
What could she say to them?—
of a man sentenced to die a traitor.
"Your father took no orders, children."
At Nuremberg, Justice Friesler stood where you did
Dare I say, not so proud as you.

Who remembers the heroes of the White Rose?
Who rest in Perlach cemetery
after the blade came so swiftly down
Who dared to care, and to defy
the god who raped their land.
Who struggled for a new tomorrow
and the dream of an era gone by—
the sun, the orchards and
the shaded forests reaching for the sky.



Elyse Kule

The Argument

A door opened, and we were herded onto an outdoor platform to await the arrival of the cable car. I had already begun its ten thousand-odd foot ascent, and I could see it in the distance, a miniature red speck suspended in the air above the vast glaciers of snow and ice. We waited out there in the below freezing temperature for what seemed like hours; although we were packed too closely together to move at all, our body heat kept each other warm — relatively speaking, that is.

And this is supposed to be for fun, I thought. Here we are, huddled together on a platform in the middle of a wilderness of snow and ice, and we're here — more or less — of our own free will. In fact, we had spent large sums of money to get here.

We were standing on the Aiguille du Midi, one of the many jagged peaks of Europe's tallest mountain, Mt. Blanc. And it was cold. Nothing living or moving could be seen among the formidable peaks of rock and the vast expanses of snow, nothing, that is, except a few hardy blackbirds — and us. Tourists from all over the world had come to this spot, and more were pouring onto the icy banks of the mountain by the dozens. One group would be stuffed into a cable car in Chamonix while another was being loaded at the Aiguille; the two would travel up, or down, and the occupants would be deposited at their destinations; then the cars would be reloaded and the whole process would start anew. The cars were packed with as many passengers as possible, which insured a good profit for the owners and a thoroughly uncomfortable ride for us — this is what I was thinking as I shivered on the platform along with thirty or so other unfortunate souls. And we paid good money for this, I thought...

Suddenly a bell rang and we prepared for the dreaded squeeze into the approaching cable car. As soon as the car came to a full stop, the doors were flung open and the unbearable crush to get inside began. I was shoved, or more accurately, *thrown* into the already crowded compartment along with my fellow passengers. Just when I was sure I could no longer endure the squeezing and pushing and jostling, the doors slammed shut and, with an abrupt jerk, the car began the descent.

As soon as I had caught my breath, I looked around at my fellow travelers and tried to get my bearings. One person I couldn't ignore was an old man wearing a Basque beret. He was standing next to me, or perhaps I should say on top of me, since he was standing quite firmly on my right foot.

"Excusez-moi, monsieur, mais... mon pied..."

He apparently hadn't heard, or at least he'd pretended not to hear, as his foot remained planted on mine. Great, I thought, I'll just stand here in pain for half-an-hour or so and I'll never be able to walk right again... I'll just collapse when we get to the bottom, and I'll be trampled on by dozens of rude, insensitive, self-centered tourists, and all because of some deaf old Basque who refused to get off my foot...

"EXCUSEZ-MOI, MAIS MON PIED..."

He looked at me in surprise, as if he hadn't known I existed, and hastily removed his foot, saying in a crisp British accent, "So sorry. The compartment is so crowded, though, that I find it quite difficult to find a place to stand, don't you?"

Oh boy, I thought, he's *English*, you fool!

"Um, yes, quite. I'm sorry I snapped at you like that; it's just that I... I thought you were French, what with the beret and all..."

It's going to be a long ride, I thought, a long, long ride...

I had just repositioned myself and settled into a somewhat less uncomfortable position when I was jolted back and the cable car came to an abrupt halt, throwing us all, in one big heap, onto the floor. There ensued quite a commotion while we picked ourselves up and brushed off the dust from our clothes. We stared at one another accusingly, as if each thought it was the other's fault. However, we hadn't had much time to wonder at the disturbance when shouting was heard from across the car. We all turned to face the commotion, or perhaps I should say *tried* to face it, as there were at least fifteen people between me and whatever the commotion was; so I had to make do with whatever was being said.

All I could make out was that there were two men, a Frenchman and an Italian, and they were arguing furiously about something. Fortunately, though, the Englishman understood Italian, and he related the occurrence to me as best he could.

It seemed that the Italian was a tourist, and in his haste to get a spot near a window he had pushed aside — of all people — the operator of the car, a Frenchman. There followed a heated dispute during which the operator stopped the cable car and refused to start it up again unless the Italian apologized. This, of course, the Italian refused to do; so the two kept arguing and the car kept swaying, and the passengers kept getting more and more alarmed.

Well, kid, this is it, I thought, as I stared in horror at the gaping crevasses thousands of feet below. This is the end of the road... What a way to go. I could just see us all starving to death months later, held hostage by the operator. Starving to death... I'd rather jump into the crevasses below, I thought. It's much quicker. But is it less painful? Death by a broken neck or by freezing to death in a bottomless chasm... Thousands of years later, I thought, my body would be discovered beneath the snow and ice by some archaeologists or — better yet — construction workers. That's it! They'd be excavating the site for Mt. Blanc Condominiums and they'd just happen upon my bones. An "expert" would deduce that I was a young male between the ages of twelve and twenty-five, and that I'd lived sometime in the 1800's. What a way to go...

The pitch of the two men's yelling suddenly increased — something which I hadn't thought possible. I found that if I inched a little farther forward I could hear them more clearly and even catch a glimpse or two of them.

They were standing quite close to each other, their fists clenched at their sides or waving threateningly in the air; and they were throwing insults at each other. I had never before seen so much rage as I saw in their faces:

they were deep red, and looked ready to burst; their eyes were dilated and their lips trembling. The Frenchman would hurl some slang insult at the Italian, who would return a similar one in Italian. The longer this went on, the more impotent their rage became; finally someone from the crowd yelled out to the Frenchman, "He can't understand you!" This occasioned a brief respite from the arguing while the Frenchman tried to conjure up some terrible insult in Italian from his seemingly limited vocabulary. When he couldn't come up with one, he looked to us for help. I turned around to see my English friend making his way to where the operator was standing. The crowd, anxious to see what he was going to do, respectfully made way for him. On reaching the Frenchman, he leaned over secretly and whispered into his ear. Although we couldn't make out what he was saying, we watched as the Frenchman's face lit up with a kind of sadistic anticipation. When the Englishman had finished, he hurriedly beat a retreat and took his place next to me. There was a mysterious smile on his face, as if he were harboring some amusing secret all his own. He wouldn't tell me a thing, though; all he said was, "You'll see."

Well, I watched the Frenchman attentively, waiting to see what he was going to say. Apparently he was rehearsing his lines, for his lips moved silently and he wore an expression of concentration. The Italian was all the while standing in bewilderment, not understanding in the least what was going on.

There was a deathly silence that lasted only a few seconds. Then the Frenchman, in all his fury, spat out a sentence in Italian, shaking his fist defiantly at his opposer. This done, he assumed a fighting position, rolled up his sleeves, and prepared for the worst. So did we all — all, that is, except those who understood Italian.

At first the Italian's face went blank, he looked like a man who had just been hit on the head and was dazed from the impact. We waited in horror: what could he possibly have said that was so devastating?

And then a strange thing happened: the Italian began to smile — slowly at first, then little by little it widened until his whole face was laughing and his body shook with convulsions.

While he was laughing in this uncontrollable manner, I turned to my friend and asked for an explanation.

"He's just told his arch-enemy," the Englishman replied, "that he has lovely blue eyes."

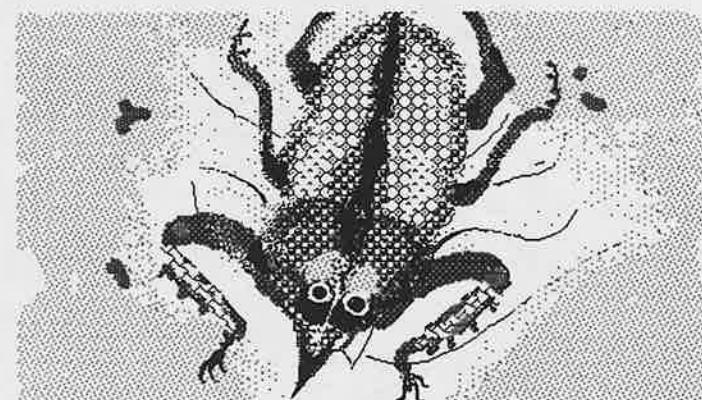
The longer the Italian laughed, the more annoyed the Frenchman became; finally, when it seemed he could bear it no longer, the Italian took out a pocket Italian-French dictionary and said in French, "And you have lovely eyes too, monsieur." At first the Frenchman didn't understand, then when it had dawned on him exactly what he had said, he, too, began to laugh.

I must say, it was strange to watch two men who, minutes earlier, had been arguing passionately, laughing so heartily together. They both kept repeating "...lovely blue eyes!" to each other, until they were in such a fit of hysterics they were rendered speechless.

When they had recovered somewhat, the Italian took out a booklet of conversational French and stammered out an apology to the operator, who, using the same Italian-French booklet, returned the apology in Italian. They did look funny, reading out sentences to each other; but they did their best, and they were willing to make fools of themselves for friendship's sake. They shook hands warmly, and the operator made a space for the Italian by him, so they could both be near a window. Somebody from the crowd broke out a bottle of wine, and the Frenchman took a loaf of bread from his bag, both of which were passed around among us all. The Italian started singing the "Marseillaise," which apparently was the only French he knew; and it wasn't long before everyone had joined in until the little car seemed to shake with the noise. When we had finished with that, the Frenchman took up the "Ave Maria," and we continued in this manner all the way back to Chamonix.

I almost felt like kissing the ground when I stepped out of the cable car; instead, I straightaway bought an ice cream cone to celebrate my not having to die from starvation or freeze to death in a crevasse. French ice cream had never, I thought happily, tasted so good.

Charlotte Mandell



Computer Bug by Mandell

Setting Free

There's a part of me you'll never see,
a feeling I will not set free.
Inside I hold a pool of tears,
for only myself to hear.
Are these tears of mine happy
or are they sad?
Do I cry of a love I never had?
Are you there wanting my heart,
or faking each mood and moving apart?
Outside a smile shines with glory
still not knowing the full story,
but loving the man with charm in his eyes,
struggling to say goodbye.

Ilene Springer

Burning colors remind me,
How I miss you this autumn.
In the russet leaves,
I see your auburn hair,
In the sky of azure,
your intense blue eyes
reflect in my mind.
From the tall golden trees,
I feel your warm love encircling me.
And the leaves I see again,
some orange, yellow, brown,
like the flames of our October
moments by the fireplace.
And the green grass
seems to dance in the wind,
As if you were there
running to catch me and hold me
in your arms.
The appletrees of shiny red,
give visions of our love,
so fresh, so new, so complete.
Now you are gone,
and the colors of autumn
bring back memories I cherish.

Ilene Springer

Prospective Perspectives

The water's ebbing flowing
Cast shadows saddle forces
The ripples spreading growing
Trace inward towards their sources.

Two mirrors grasp forever
Granules grieve forgotten treasure
Tired bodies gasp for life
Amniotic sunfish suspended
in pleasure.

Isolation conceived
Shatters contingencies
Fissures and boundaries destroy
Pupils give birth to shadow
All within the contours
Of the unsuspecting iris.

Lustful lonely eyes tend to their eddy
Within their fertile storm
Pupils ravage blindly
Contorting shadows anew.

Crystals augment upon their nature
Open ended salvation abounds
Sands shifting always
Expounding upon the only rule.

Steve Lonergan



Josh Lessing

To Bukowski

"He got a nose," Marty says,
"starts somewhere up under that watchcap,
goes south for a while,
and turns left down near his teeth.
A real ten-pounder.

I don't know how it got broke -
maybe from when he was still fightin' . . .

I seen him in the grocery Wednesday,
over by the mail -
the store where they got the new registers
with the red numbers, like on your watch.

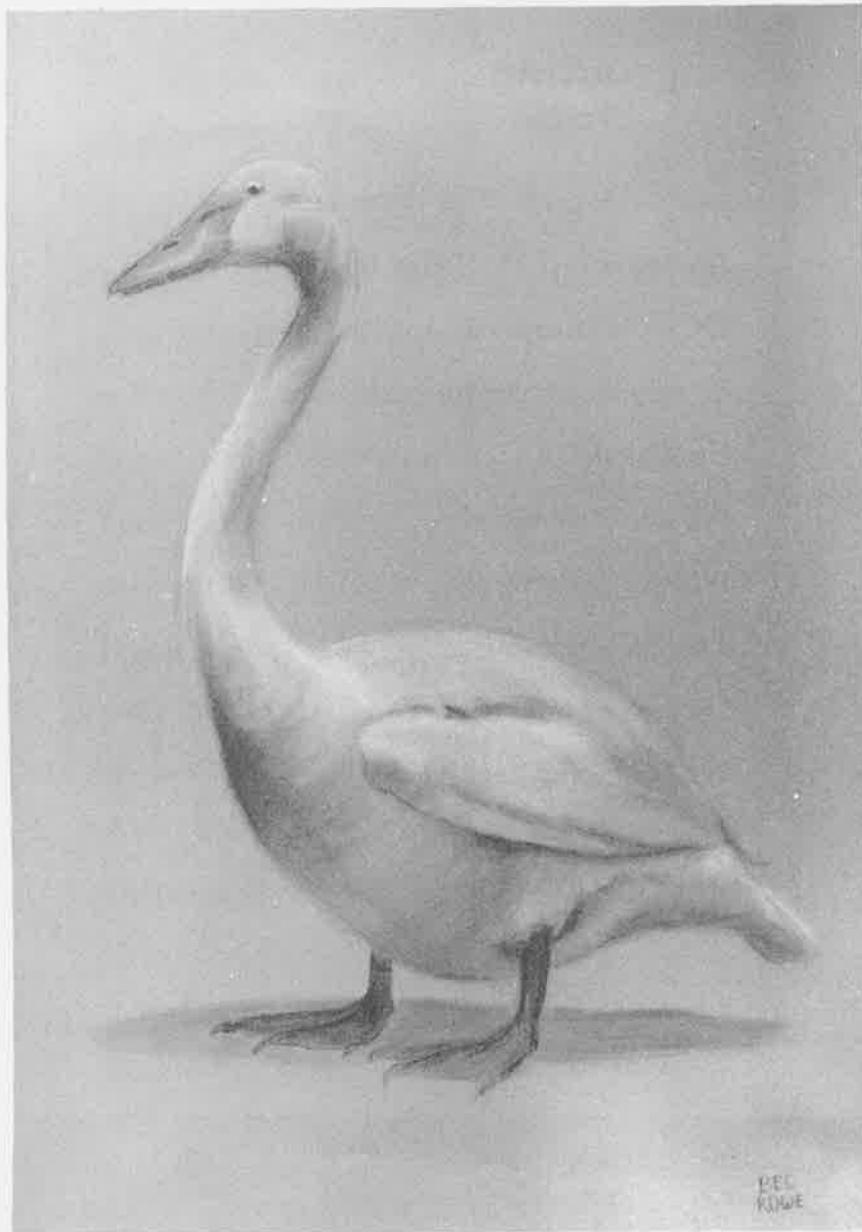
He come through the line and
those checkout girls was snickering:
'Maybe you'll marry someone like that, Lilly.
Maybe you'll marry someone like that.' "

Bill Littlefield

The Sprouting

Now, Eliot, see The Wasteland sprout
And past our struggles to get out
Of ancient dryness and "no rain",
Emerged, we merge with water,
Flow again.
We don't sit by
With injured thigh:
The fish-burn's healed,
Ourselves annealed.
We swim and feel Aquarius roll.
The Sphinx has come to Bethlehem
And we are whole.

Fran MacPherson



Rebecca Rowe